

database that contained detailed identity profiles on 220-million Americans. The point is, they used this information on more than 200 million Americans to target Secretary Clinton supporters with negative and misleading Facebook ads, the goal being voter suppression, as clearly stated by a senior member of the Trump campaign.

Well, let's go back to the principle laid out by President Ronald Reagan, and again I quote him: "For this Nation to be true to its principles, we cannot allow any American's vote to be denied, diluted or defiled."

So I call on my colleagues who have been the proponents of voter suppression, who have been the proponents of attacking the Constitution, who have been the proponents of government of, by, and for the most powerful and the most privileged rather than the people, to listen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask unanimous consent for 2 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I didn't hear how long.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Two minutes.

Mr. CORNYN. No objection here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. I thank the Chair.

Those words should continue to reverberate in this Chamber. Colleagues, set your sights on the vision of ending your denying, diluting, and defiling of the most fundamental right close to the hearts of Americans and the foundation of a government of, by, and for the people. Only then will we have a government that responds to the real issues Americans face rather than the special goals of the most powerful and the most privileged.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

## 21ST CENTURY CURES BILL

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, yesterday I spoke about the 21st Century Cures bill the House passed by a very large margin last night, and I am looking forward to taking up that legislation here in the Senate. I am particularly grateful that it includes some mental health reform legislation that I introduced here in the Senate. This represents the very first mental health reform in more than a decade, and it is high time we got it done. There are a lot of people who contributed to this effort, and I think it is something we can all be proud of.

With the mental health portion of the bill, we have two chief goals in mind—first, to help those who are mentally ill get the treatment they need, and secondly, to help law enforcement and first responders know how to respond to a potential mental health cri-

sis in order to keep the person they are responding to safe, as well as the first responders themselves.

It opens up existing funds so that they can be used for more outpatient treatment options. That way, local and State governments can help identify mentally ill offenders, assess their mental health needs, and get them in the right treatment to improve their condition, rather than sending them to jail, where they will be warehoused and their condition will likely just get worse and worse.

This legislation will also provide flexibility to State and local authorities so they can use what works in their communities to help mentally ill individuals in the criminal justice system get healthy. This could include things such as assisted outpatient treatments, where families can help their loved ones, with a backstop of court supervision so they will remain compliant with their doctors' orders and take their medication, which will allow them to lead productive lives.

This legislation will make available Federal grants so that our law enforcement officials have the resources to get the kind of training they need. When law enforcement officials are called to the scene of an incident with somebody suffering from a mental health crisis, it is very important that they know how to deescalate that crisis, both for the well-being of the individual suffering that crisis as well as the law enforcement officials responding.

It will allow the creation of more crisis-intervention teams comprised of law enforcement and first responders and even school officials, where appropriate, so they can rapidly respond to and counter a threat of violence in the community.

Yesterday I received messages from some of the people who have worked with us on this legislation and know all too well how mental illness can affect our families. One individual wrote:

After losing both [a] son and a husband to suicide, and having an adult son with bipolar disorder, I know only too well the frustrations of the mental health system. Thank you, Senator, for your determination and hard work to bring change to this broken system.

This is why these mental health reforms are so important. People need help and the mental health system needs reform, and that is why we need to pass the 21st Century Cures bill—for all the good it will do in addition to these important reforms in dealing with mental health challenges around the country. So I look forward to finishing the job next week and sending it to the President's desk.

## MILITARY READINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Separately, Madam President, I come to the floor today to highlight a pressing national security concern that just doesn't get enough attention. Members often come to the floor to talk about specific military

threats that other nations pose to the United States, and that is good and right. For example, we have heard a lot about Iran this week as the Senate considers the Iran Sanctions Extension Act—a bill that will help ensure that President-Elect Trump and future Presidents will have the authority they need to reimpose sanctions on Iran, even in spite of President Obama's flawed nuclear deal which provided relief from these same types of sanctions and others without getting a whole lot of meaningful concessions from Tehran in return. This bill passed the House a few weeks ago with more than 400 votes, and I am glad there has been significant bipartisan support to move it forward here.

But today I want to talk about a problem that is partly of our own making, and that is threats to our long-term military readiness. It is no secret that our military leaders continually call on Congress to adequately fund the weapons programs that enable our troops to defend our Nation.

The major concern I have and one that is shared by leadership at the Pentagon is that our military's technological edge on the battlefield is being whittled away by other countries, such as China and Russia, that are working at breakneck speed, investing millions of dollars to erase our advantage in many areas of military capability. That means we have to wake up to the risks that are inherent in this situation and do more to invest in the next generation of weapons to meet the challenges on the battlefields of tomorrow. The nations that are most belligerent and hostile to America and our interests are not cutting back on their investment in military technology, so we simply do not have the luxury of being complacent.

Recently, I had a chance to meet with Under Secretary of Defense Frank Kendall, the Defense Department's top acquisitions person or top weapons buyer. He is charged with equipping our men and women in uniform, and he has been thinking long and hard about the need to get the next generation of our military the very best capabilities possible. As he has said publicly in speeches and in congressional testimony, he is concerned that our enemies are rapidly expanding and building out their technological innovations for military applications.

But it is important to understand that these countries aren't just building up their own militaries to simply defend themselves; countries such as China and Russia are doing all they can to invest in specific technologies to defeat our forces and to be used for purposes of aggressive activity, whether it is in the South China Sea or in Europe, where Russia continues to threaten the NATO alliance. Countries such as China and Russia are preparing not for next week but for the coming decades to effectively counter and defeat the U.S. militarily. That is a big concern of Secretary Kendall, and it